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A
S E R M O N,
PREACHED MARCH 10, 1776,
At ST. ANDREW'S, HOLBORN,
BEFORE THE
HUMANE SOCIETY,
INSTITUTED FOR THE
Recovery of Persons apparently Drowned,
A N D
PUBLISHED at their REQUEST.

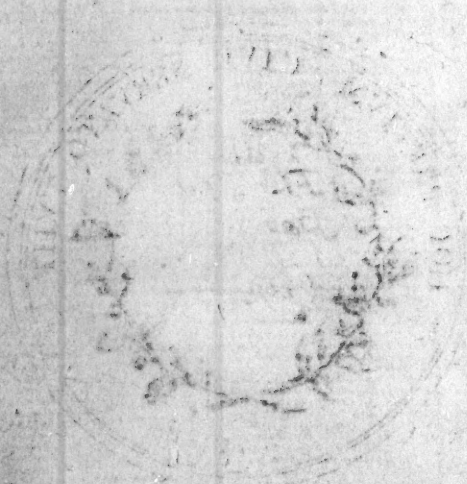
By WILLIAM DODD, LL. D. K
CHAPLAIN to the EARL of CHESTERFIELD.



W. Sharpe



L O N D O N:
PRINTED for the SOCIETY;
And Sold by J. RIVINGTON, in St. Paul's Church-yard; E. and
C. DILLY, in the Poultry; and J. ROBSON, in New Bond-street.
M,DCC,LXXVI.



Anniversary Meeting of the Society,

12th March, 1776.

Ordered unanimously,

THAT the Thanks of this Society be given to the Reverend Dr. DODD, for his excellent Sermon preached in favour of this Institution, and that the Doctor be requested to publish the same.

M. M. ROBINSON, Secretary,



E R R A T A

Page 1, for *early*, read *modern*.

2, for *Elijab*, read *Elisha*.

13, Note, for *a person*, line 5, read *persons*.

20, line 11, for *tbousand*, read *tbousandib*.

28, line 15, for *no*, read *nor*. line 30, read *believe*.

A

SERMON, &c.

I KINGS, ch. xvii. v. 21, 22.

And he stretched himself upon the child three times; and cried unto the Lord and said, "O Lord, my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again."

And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived.

AMONGST the various proofs of the Non-Eternity of the World, that drawn from the progress of science, and the lateness of many useful inventions, hath always been urged with success. Indeed it is singular to observe, that we can trace from very early dates, several of those arts and improvements, which appear to us almost indispensably necessary to the being and happiness of society; insomuch that we are apt to wonder how it was possible for our forefathers

to have enjoyed life without them. Your own reflection will in a moment suggest to you instances abundant. But you will allow me, as one example at least, to hold forth to your observation that admirable Institution, which we are this day assembled to promote; an Institution so humane and beneficial, and at the same time, as it should seem, so palpable and plain, that one would wonder it had not ranked from the earliest days amongst the common arts of life, and found a place in the Police of every civilized state. Yet, so far as we are able to trace the history of it, there is not the least idea or mention of the benevolent attempt, till within the century past, and that in so feeble a manner, as to attract little attention:* and it is only within these few years that a Society, and a regular plan to carry on the good design, has been formed in a neighbouring country—the cradle of this happy discovery which now interests all humanity! †

It has been often remarked on useful inventions, that we are astonished they have not sooner been discovered, so evident do they seem, so easy and natural in their principles, when once made known: a remark never more justly applied, than in the case before us. For now that experience has put beyond doubt the *practicability* of

* The first tract which we have heard of, published on this subject, was printed at Rome, and entitled, LA SENA (Petri) Dissertatio; cui Titulus est, Chombrosus, sive de iis, qui in aquis pereunt. Romæ in 8vo. 1637. The French Memoirs mention two more before the year 1700.

† See p. 14, 15.

the fact; we are equally surprized and concerned, that life for so many centuries past has been unhappily wasted in those cases, which, our Institution clearly demonstrates, were recoverable: and we are the more surprized, when we reflect, that as nothing seems more natural than for the hand of affection to attempt the recovery of life, lost by any sudden and distressful accident; so reason manifestly suggests the experiment; while the *sacred scriptures* themselves, fertile in every useful intelligence, appear plainly to point out the possibility of the practice.

The single case referred to in the chapter of the text, might have been sufficient, one would have imagined, to have kindled a train of reflection, and to have induced at least an attentive enquiry. But probably the first spark of thought has been immediately extinguished by a consideration of the *miraculous* nature of this and other similar instances. Far am I from wishing, far from intending, to diminish or weaken the force and divinity of the scripture miracles. My known zeal and constant attention to that scripture, will render, I persuade myself, every such supposition groundless. But those miracles, like every other part of sacred writ, were intended for, and are fraught with variety of instruction: and we know that miracles themselves, though under the immediate agency of God, were and are operated by means of second causes; we may therefore fairly and reasonably consider them in this view. And as the celebrated case in the text not only suggests some important ideas relative to our In-

stitution, but supplies us with the most pleasing and irresistible arguments to benevolence, and consequently to a liberal assistance of the present good work, I will first take a general view of it; and on that foundation will proceed, secondly, to shew, from NATURE and from FACT, the *possibility* of the undertaking we wish to recommend, and will endeavour to recommend to your protection, as *citizens*, as *men*, and as *Christians*.

I. First then, let us consider the case before us as an incentive to benevolence in general; and to an Institution for the Recovery of Life, lost by any sudden and calamitous accident, in particular.*

It

* It is necessary to observe, that though this Institution is immediately calculated for the "Recovery of Persons apparently dead by drowning," yet the means used, and the good effects proposed, extend to various other kinds of sudden and accidental death. These are thus enumerated in a tract on the subject, by that humane and admirable physician, Dr. Fothergill;—"The diseases in which the methods used to restore persons apparently dead, may be of use, are those called sudden deaths from an invisible cause, apoplexies, fits of various kinds, as hysterics, faintings, and many other disorders, wherein persons in a moment sink down and expire.

"The various casualties in which they may be tried with a prospect of success, are many; suffocations from the sulphureous damps of mines, coal pits, &c. the condensed air of long unopened wells or caverns; the noxious vapours arising from fermenting liquors received from a narrow vent; the steam of burning charcoal; sulphureous mineral acids; arsenical effluvia, &c.

"Perhaps those who to appearance are struck dead by lightning, or any violent agitation of the passions, as joy, fear, surprise, &c. might frequently be recovered by strongly blowing

It is not easy to conceive any circumstances more unfavourable to Charity, than those in which Elijah found the widow of *Sarepta*. Poor and distressed, amidst the common want her own was peculiarly pressing: and reduced, as she seemed, to the very brink of despair, she was preparing to eat her last meal with her beloved child, and submit to her fate. *As the Lord thy God liveth*, said she to the Prophet's request for relief, *I have not a cake! but only a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse:—and behold I am gathering a few sticks that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it and die!*

Who could have wondered, or who would have blamed, if in such a situation she had not only with-held the requested relief, but churlishly chided the petitioner, who seemed so selfishly to claim the last and wretched pittance of the

blowing into the lungs, and by that means communicating motion to the vital organs.

“Malefactors executed at the gallows, would afford opportunities of discovering how far this method might be successful in relieving such as may have unhappily become their own executioners by hanging themselves. It might at least be tried: the only ill consequence that could accrue from a discovery of this kind, would be easily obviated by prolonging the present allotted time of suspension.

“This method may conduce to the saving of a great many lives, as it is practicable by every one who happens to be present at the accident, without loss of time, without expence, with little trouble, and less skill; as it is perhaps the only expedient of which it can be justly said, that it may possibly do *great good*, but cannot do harm.”—See also Plan and Reports of the Society for 1775, p. 10.

widow

widow and the orphan ! Yet so different is her conduct, that elevated by faith, and warmed by genuine charity, she freely imparts, nay, and *first* imparts the scanty meal to *Elijah's* hunger : who, in grateful return, and as an animating example to benevolence in all future ages—blessed, thro' the power of his God, the barrel and the cruse ; and gained a continual increase to them, through his divine agency, who never suffers acts of genuine humanity to pass unrewarded.*

But how mysterious are his ways ! how dark and intricate to the human view, until himself shall please to draw aside the curtain, and represent the whole in its full and fair connection !—And here I cannot but request you to stand still a moment, and observe the high excellence and utility of the sacred scriptures, which afford such support to our faith, such consolation to our hope in the noble display, which they make of the interference, the wisdom, and goodness of that providence on whom is our great dependance, our principal stay through life ! To the mere natural eye, what a prospect is that of a prophet of the most high God, peculiarly called and peculi-

* It may be proper just to remark, that this miracle, unlike the generality both of the Old and New Testament, does not appear to have been wrought as a public attestation to the truth of the Prophet's commission, or as confirmatory of any particular point of doctrine ; but merely as an act of *kindness*, and retribution to the singular humanity of the widow ; and in consequence, as an establishment of *her* faith in the *God of Israel* ; though certainly it might also be a great means to promote that faith amongst the people of her town and country,

arly honoured, yet persecuted and driven into a distant country by a *weak* and *wicked* King! and reduced to such extremity of distress, as to pray the scanty dole of a little meal and oil, from a poor famished and afflicted widow! But remove the veil!—see the great secret of Providence discover'd!—and in all the concerns of life, you must gather fortitude and instruction from the consolatory view!

So again, who can be surprized at the language of the widow, when amidst all the humanity which she had shewn to the man of God, and the palpable proof she had received of his great master's approbation of that humanity—she was punished with the severest stroke of affliction, and saw her son—staff of her age, and support of her widowed state, lying a dead corpse before her! Was it not natural; was it not reasonable enough to say,* *What have I to do with thee, O thou Man of God? Art thou come to call my sins to remembrance, and to slay my son!* Elijah himself seems equally shocked at the disastrous accident, and while unacquainted with the great design of Providence, his language runs nearly in the same stile—*O Lord my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow, with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son?*”—“No, mighty prophet of the God of mercy, speedily shalt thou find, that thy God never brings evil on any for acts of humanity and love. As a noble return for such acts, thou shalt be the happy instrument to re-

* See Bishop Hall's Contemplations on this subject.

store this son to his mother. Thou shalt be the happy instrument to vindicate the ways of Providence ; and by this illustrious miracle, to teach mankind in all succeeding times—that *Providence*, graciously attentive to human affairs, in every circumstance of life, intends the human good ; and in no circumstance will desert those who humanely compassionate and benevolently relieve distress, far as they are able. The *widow's mite*, nay the *cup of cold water*, we are assured, shall in no wise lose their reward !”

But while we contemplate with pleasure the good Providence of God, crowning the charity of this poor widow with the noblest bounty, the *restoration* of her son to life ; we must not on any account pass over the means which the Prophet applied, directed, no doubt, by the great Lord of Life to the attainment of this happy end. *He stretched himself three times upon the child, and cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again ;* “ Let the life of this child be restored, and let him revive :” which appears to be all that is implied by the phrase in the text ; the Hebrew word * rendered *soul*, signifying only the mere animal life, and not the immaterial and immortal spirit.—In a parallel miracle, performed by Elijah, and recorded in the 4th chapter of the 2d book of Kings, we have a more minute account of the process used by

* נֶפֶשׁ *Nepesh*. See my Annotations on the Bible, Gen. ii. v. 7.

that prophet : we there read, That *he went up and lay upon the child, and first put his mouth upon his mouth, then his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands* * ; and he stretched himself upon the child, and the flesh of the child waxed warm : then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro : and went up and stretched himself again upon him, and the child (the lamp of life gradually rekindling in him) sneezed several times ; after which he opened his eyes, recovered, and was restored to his mother.

* Scheutzer is of opinion that this child's disease was an *apoplexy* : See his *Physica Sacra* on the place ; and *Valesius*, that it was a *Lipothymia*, or *Syncope*, and therefore recoverable. See his *Philosophia Sacra*. But none of the Commentators have given any rational account of the Gesticulations used by the prophets. Scheutzer on the sneezing observes, "*Poterat certe sternutatio violentâ membranæ i-tuitariæ contractione liberare Caput a collectis in capite viscidis humoribus.*" One of the cases related in a Dissertation by Dr. J. Engelman, and published by Dr. Johnson, has a singular reference to the miracle before us : "A woman in child-bed being happily delivered, suddenly fainted, lost all sensation, and lay upwards of a quarter of an hour apparently dead, pale as a corpse, with scarcely any perceptible motion in her pulse. A physician was sent for : her own maid in the mean while being out of patience at his delay, attempted to assist her herself: and extending herself upon her mistress, applied her mouth to hers, blew in as much breath as she possibly could, and in a very short time the exhausted woman awaked as out of a profound sleep, when proper things being given her, she recovered. The maid being asked how she came to think of this expedient, said "she had seen an instance of its success at *Altenburg*, where the same practice was used by the midwives with children to the happiest effect."—To this purpose the reader is particularly referred to some curious cases related by Dr. Cogan in our *Society's Reports*, &c. for the present year, p. 70, &c.

It is particularly observable, that in the resurrections performed by our Lord, we never find him using any actions or gestures: but in one performed by St. Paul we are acquainted, that like these two Prophets—these servants of the mighty master of the work—he *fell*, or stretched himself on the young man who was taken up *dead*, and embracing him, restored him alive to his friends.† Now we are perfectly assured, that neither words nor gesticulations of any kind could, or can, produce the least effect in such cases; and yet it seems inconsistent to suppose, “that in the cases referred to, Prophets and holy men like these would have used such gestures and actions without some reasonable cause.” And for my own part, I hesitate not to declare that there does not appear one probable or possible cause to be assigned, but such as fall in with those modes of *restoration to life*, suggested and used by that *institution*, which by communication of heat, by inflation of the lungs, and giving again respiration and action to the vital parts, brings back from the regions of death, and restores the son to the rejoicing parent.

And though by the blessing of God this process is now evidently discovered, and palpably carried on by merely human means, yet in the cases, which we have been considering, it may fairly, and with the utmost propriety, be deemed *miraculous*; as probably the immediate suggestion of the Deity; and as particularly acknowledged to be his act, by the address presented to

† See Acts ch. xx. ver. 9, 10.

him,

him, " O Lord, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again—and the Lord heard the voice of *Elijah*—and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. || An immediate and accurate discussion of this subject would open to me a large field ; but the use I would wish to make of it at present is only what I suggested at the beginning ; namely, the HINTS which these stories might have supplied to the more early *discovery* of the present life-restoring method ; and also the DEGREE OF CREDIBILITY, which facts of so early an age give, to religious minds more especially, of the *possibility* of this method.

II. And to *shew* that POSSIBILITY, from *nature* and from *facts*, was the second thing proposed.

The testimony of *facts*, it must be allowed, in such a case, is abundantly sufficient : it cannot, however, but be highly pleasing and satisfactory to ingenuous minds to see that testimony confirmed from *nature* itself, and experience corroborated and encouraged by an investigation and knowledge of the human frame. On this head, as it properly belongs to another's province, I am happy to be able to produce the authority of a physician, who has exerted himself in this cause of humanity, and whose name and writings do honour to his profession. He observes, that " from the nature of things per-

|| *Elijah's* address to the Almighty, on this awful occasion, affords the *Medical Assistants* a very important hint, never to omit a serious application to God, when they are called in to attempt the affecting work of restoration to life.

sons apparently dead from drowning, or from other *sudden accidents* *, are more generally in a recoverable state than has been imagined. To evince the truth of which proposition, he remarks, that in men, and other animals, life does not immediately cease [as hath been commonly supposed] upon the cessation of the action of the lungs and heart, and the consequent stagnation of the blood †. But that, though the circulation of the blood is necessary to the support of life, the living state of animals depends not upon this alone, but principally upon a certain condition in the nerves and muscular fibres, by which they are sensible and irritable, and on which the action of the heart itself depends. This condition, therefore, is to be considered as the *vital principle in animals*; and as long as it subsists, or can be restored to its activity and vigour, (*the organization || of the parts remaining entire*) there is a possibility

* See page 4 foregoing, and note.

† That the *Life is in the Blood*, appears to me a great and clear truth, founded on the information of that scripture, which I have before observed, p. 3, is "fertile in every useful intelligence," more fertile perhaps than generally supposed. The eating of blood is there prohibited; and the reason on which that prohibition is grounded, is, *for THE BLOOD IS THE LIFE*. See Genesis ix. 4. *A thesis*, this well worthy the serious investigation of the philosopher and naturalist.

|| This is particularly to be noted, as the *signs* of death are so uncertain; and almost all have been found to fail, except *putrefaction*, which some eminent writers seem to assert as the sole *infallible sign of death*, under the circumstances here specified. See *Winslow's Latin Dissertation*, translated by

possibility of the functions of life being revived, even though they have ceased a considerable time. The precise period to which such a condition as above described, and as necessary to renovation may extend, cannot be determined; but as we conclude from analogy that it may subsist very long, so in full proof that it does so, we may appeal to the many well attested *facts* of the recovery of drowned persons, who have been some hours in an apparent state of death.*

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by Bruhier into French, "on the uncertainty of the signs of death," and letters on the same subject, by M. Lewis. *Vicentini*, a physician of *Venice*, proves in a memorial presented to the magistrates of that state, that it is impossible to determine how long a person may lie under water, or how long they may remain without signs of life after they are taken out, and yet not be past all hopes of recovery: and that as an *incipient putridity* is the only *absolute sign* of death, every possible method should be pursued to prolong their days. And the excellent *Tissot* in his *Avis au peuple* observes, that a *commencement of putrefaction* is the only mark as yet known for being absolutely certain of the death of a person. See Dr. Cogan's translation of the *Dutch Memoirs*.

* See a letter to Lord Cathcart by Dr. CULLEN; who observes further, "that from the dissection of drowned men and other animals, it is known, that very often the water does not enter into the cavity of the lungs, nor even into the stomach, in any quantity, to do hurt to the system; and in general it is known, that in most cases, no hurt is done to the organization of the vital parts. It is therefore probable, that the death which ensues, or seems to ensue in drowned persons, is entirely owing to the stopping of respiration, and to the ceasing in consequence of the circulation of the blood, whereby the body loses its heat, and with that the activity of the vital principle. But as this heat and activity in many cases are recoverable by various means, so
long

Indeed these *facts* are not only so numerous, but authenticated so perfectly, as to leave no doubt of the possibility of the attempt, even in minds the most sceptical and scrupulous; facts not confined to one or another country, but happily transmitted from almost every quarter of the Continent, nay and of *America* itself †. Very many, very striking and extraordinary have been the preservations, in *Holland* particularly, a country from its nature and situation in an especial manner liable to accidents by water, and to which, (as we remarked at the beginning) in consequence of these circumstances, this beneficent institution owes its rise! An institution so coincident with all the finest feelings of humanity, and so immediately interesting to the public welfare, that in the very short period of *ten*

long as this can be done, it must be possible also to recover drowned persons." And we will add, that the *means* should never be too hastily deserted; in the variety of cases, which we are now so happy as to have before us, as well in the memoirs from *Amsterdam, Paris, &c.* as from our own society, it appears, that the *assistants* have all the encouragement in the world to persevere, as long as possible, in their humane efforts to restore. The *Paris Memoirs*, as a particular encouragement, mention the case of the wife of *Baron Wenzel*, the celebrated *oculist*, who, shipwrecked in her passage betwixt *Dover* and *Calais*, was taken out of the water about *one* at noon; from which hour they continued their endeavours to recover her till *nine* in the evening; before which hour, no signs of life appeared; but from that hour she began to recover, and was perfectly restored.

† See in the Reports of the Society for 1775, p. 38, an Extract of a letter from New York.

years,

years, since its original establishment,* it hath made a rapid progress through the Continent†; and we are happy now in receiving and reading from various states pleasing accounts of the numerous restorations to life, by means of this salutary invention. Indeed it hath appeared in so just and important a view to other nations, that it hath generally been taken under the protection of the state; and forms, as surely it ought to form a part of the regular Police of those governments, which wisely interest themselves in the preservation of their people.

It hath not met with so fortunate a reception amongst us—for, alas! amidst the constant struggles for pre-eminence and place, and the foul contests of dangerous civil strife, what attention can the ruling powers be supposed to pay to milder works of humanity like this? But what has been wanting in the public zeal, the benevolence of a few private individuals hath laudably supplied; and to their patriotic efforts, ever to

* It was established in Holland in 1767; and since that period, their Memoirs mention between two and three hundred Restorations!

† There are establishments of this kind not only in *Holland* and *France*, but also at *Milan*, *Venice*, *Hamburgh*, *Petersburgh*, *Vienna*, &c. &c. And amongst other ends which they will doubtless effect, they will be the means, we trust, of preventing too hasty *interments*; an evil, tho' often to be complained of in our own country, yet much more to be lamented on the Continent, where the dead are commonly buried within four-and-twenty hours—and numbers consequently—horrid to think!—have been and are interred alive. See what is said on the *signs of death*, p. 12, note.

be

be remembered with the highest approbation *, we owe this institution, and the many good effects which have already proceeded from it. For young as it is, being only yet in its *second year*,—amidst all the discouragements, difficulties, and inexperience under which new undertakings almost necessarily labour, and under which an undertaking of this peculiar sort must be supposed to labour in a more especial degree;—It hath been, under God, the happy instrument of saving from the jaws of death forty-one lives !†
lives

* To do just and deserved honour to the Founders of this Society, we shall quote a short passage from the *Reports* for 1775, p. 5. “ In the year 1773 Dr. Cogan translated the Dutch Memoirs, in order to inform this part of the world of the *practicability* of recovering persons apparently drowned : And Mr. Hawes having also exerted his endeavours, to excite the attention of the public to the same subject, *these two gentlemen* united and proposed a plan (perfectly disinterested in it themselves) for the introduction of a similar institution into these kingdoms. This plan was so well received, that they were enabled to form a Society in May 1774.” The writer of the French Memoirs, speaking of this Society, observes very pleasingly, that “ the greatest part of the original subscribers being professors of the healing art in its different branches, it is hereby plainly proved, that the frequent view of suffering humanity does not harden the heart, as hath been frequently objected : And that we ought to have a greater confidence in the succours prescribed by this Institution, as its authors and directors are duly instructed in the animal economy, the resources of nature, and the case of the persons saved by their means.”

* The authors of the *Dutch Memoirs*, after enumerating 35 Cases, pathetically add, “ Let the reader maturely contemplate these 35 Cases which happened in our country alone, in the space of nine months! let him consider that they

lives, which in all human probability must have been inevitably lost, had it not been for the intervention of those means, and those encouragements, recommended and held out by the society! *means*, which it is careful exactly to prescribe; *encouragements* *, which it is diligent to diffuse as universally as it can, and which are found by happy experience to produce the desired attention and success.

You will not fail therefore, my beloved, to concur with these philanthropic endeavours, and

they relate to such a number of persons, who for a time were counted amongst the dead; and who owe the prolongation of their days (under the favour of that Providence which executes its designs by the intervention of second causes) to the means employed to save the obscure remains of life, which in all probability in a few minutes would have been destroyed beyond recovery; let him consider that these persons had all of them parents and friends interested in their restoration, and some of them tenderly interested; let him reflect upon the various services they may have rendered, and are yet in a state to render unto society; upon the opportunities they have enjoyed, and still enjoy of informing and purifying their minds, and securing eternal felicity;—and he will share with us the inexpressible joy with which so great success has inspired us: he will join with us in ascribing praise and thanksgiving to the great and only author of every good and perfect gift; he will ardently wish and contribute all in his power, that so beneficent a design may be universally encouraged and prosecuted with zeal.”

* Concerning those *means* and *encouragements*, I refer the reader to the *Plan and Reports* of the Society. The Rewards held out are certainly of the first consequence; they stimulate to action and perseverance; and the very idea that such a thing is possible, and that a *man's* *humanity* shall be rewarded, are the strongest incentives to the attempt; and to our great satisfaction, experience has proved that they are so.

to take into your kind protection this *infant* undertaking! You will foster it by your generous charity, and rear it to manhood by your continued favour and benevolence! It hath every claim to that favour; it interests in every view your benevolence.

I. As good CITIZENS, as true friends to your country, you cannot withhold your approbation and your aid from a plan so evidently calculated to promote the publick weal, by preserving the lives of the people: and the lives of an order of men more especially, who in an eminent degree contribute to that public weal in a maritime and commercial state like ours; who, *occupying their business in the great waters*, are consequently more liable to accidents upon it. Indeed the welfare and the glory of every state consisting in the multitude of its people, all real patriots must joyfully concur in every plan calculated to encrease or preserve their number †, particularly in a state like ours, whose dominion and territory extended, perhaps, far beyond the limits of ancient *Rome* itself, calls for every encouragement

† The number of the industrious and laborious common people in particular: who are the sinews of the state; and whose occupations subjecting them to various hazards and perpetual accidents. It is an incumbent duty on all those, who, in ease and affluence, enjoy the fruits of their labours, to contribute all they can to their preservation and succour. "For as all men compose but one great family, the rich and the powerful should consider themselves as the elder sons, and should treat all others as their brethren, of whom they are constituted the protectors and guardians." F.M.

to

to population ; and calls the louder at a period like the present, when devastation is commissioned to stalk horrid over the Empire, and wantonly destroy those lives which our humbler *happier* efforts so successfully labour to preserve !

2. But not as Citizens only, as MEN, we are peculiarly interested in this labour of love ! In various other charitable institutions, many who liberally contribute to them can contemplate only at a distance the miseries they sympathetically relieve, nor come within the least probability of deriving any advantage from the works they so generously support. But in the present case, to bring it near to us all, not an individual amongst us, not an individual perhaps in the whole community, but may at some time or other experience or bless its fortunate establishment. For neither high nor low, rich nor poor, young nor old, are, or can be exempt from those accidents by water, to the hazard of which almost every man's business or pleasure sooner or later, may subject him. And as the giddy heedlessness of youth, no less than the hardy and often necessary daringness of men lead to unavoidable perils of this sort, what cause, what frequent cause may the mother, may the wife have—nay, not the mother and wife alone, but the large extended circle of children, family, relations, friends !—what frequent cause may they have to bless the life-saving institution, and to pour forth their ardent prayers to those whose hearts of humanity gave birth and being to it.

Look, thou affectionate parent, look upon the child, source of all thy joys, and dearer to thee far than even life itself! Imagine that beloved one, by fatal chance, suffocated in the waters, and borne a lifeless corpse to thy melancholy home! his lovely eyes, late speaking every pleasure, now closed in death! his late active limbs, flaccid and unable to move; and every sign of total deprivation upon him!—Parent, with all thy tenderness, thou can’st not say, thou could’st not describe a thousand part of those emotions which would swell thy heart, should’st thou behold, as by God’s blessing soon thou may’st, the little spark of almost-extinguished life begin to revive,* through the skilful efforts of those instructed by this Institution to restore and to save!—Parent, thou can’st not describe what thy tender soul would feel—on hearing the first sob, the first recovering sigh of thy beloved child; on beholding the object of thy dearest care, opening once more his affectionate eyes upon thee, casting his little arms around thy neck, and bursting with thee into tears of gratitude and joy! Parent, thou can’st not tell what deep sensations would almost burst thy heart—on bearing in thy arms the dear recovered child, and presenting to the half-distracted partner of thy care—to the mother frantic with despair and grief, the

* In allusion to the very expressive and elegant motto and design of *the medal*, which the Society are now so happy as to be enabled to give to those Medical Assistants, &c. who are so fortunate as to preserve a life. See the Title Page and the Reports, &c. for 1775, p. 86.

son, who was dead, and is alive again, was lost, and is found! doubly dear for his imagined death: infinitely more valued from his supposed irreparable loss!*

But where shall I find words sufficient to paint the anguish, or lament the deplorable situation of the wife,—in one sad moment plunged from the height of happiness into the deepest woe, herself a widow, and her children fatherless! For lo! amidst the honest pursuits of industry and support, the husband, the father, in luckless moment, is whelm'd beneath the devouring waves, and lost to her and to them. Wretched widow, who now shall give thee comfort! who shall succour thy desolate orphans! and shield both them and thee—poor unprotected ones—from all the difficulties of an injurious world! “Oh blest

* Since the preaching of this, an elegant ode, written by a truly paternal pen, on a subject something similar, has been put into my hands, where the affectionate father thus describes his darling son's recovering state from a dangerous fever—

Now lengthening on the list'ning ear,

The soft-subsiding sigh we hear:

His breath, a wintry storm before,

That loudly lash'd the sounding shore;

Now sinks into a summer's breeze,

That gently lifts the swelling seas:

O'er his parch'd skin a healthful dew appears,

The stern distemper sheds repentant tears:

He smiles, he turns, he sleeps—Oh joy!—begone
my fears!

This specimen, I am satisfied, will be sufficient to engage every reader of taste and feeling, to gratify themselves with the perusal of Mr. *Cumberland's* Ode to Dr. *James*.

Society ! glorious Institution !” which in this pathetic case steps forth as a husband to the widow, as a father to the fatherless ! For see, by its benign influence, the work of humanity is begun ! the means are applied ! In agonies of joy the almost frantic wife perceives a sign of life ! she hears, and for the first time with transport hears, a deep groan from his heart. She sinks, o’erpower’d with the mighty efforts of affectionate anxiety ; she sinks on his recovering frame—She bathes with tears of love his re-animating face—she sees at length, she sees !—support her God of nature in the mighty struggle ! she sees the lamp of life relumined in his countenance ! He lives,—he lives !—and she no more laments herself a widow, and her children fatherless !

“ Oh blest Society ! glorious Institution !” you cannot wonder my beloved—that thus the cry re-echoes through all the surrounding friends ! It will re-echo, I am perfectly persuaded in like manner, through all your hearts : nor shall an establishment thus fertile in good—in offices of the tenderest humanity, either want your ample succour now, or your generous support and encouragement to extend it universally through our land.

3. For still it hath another call upon you, and demands your aid, not as *citizens*, not as *men*, but as **CHRISTIANS** also : as persons not singly interested in the concerns of this life, but as contemplating that life, extended to futurity, and destined to an immortality of happiness or misery ! In this awful respect, how terrible to be cut off in one sudden and unexpected moment, with
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all our sins and imperfections full upon our heads—no interval of thought or of reckoning allowed—no moments for recollection, repentance, and prayer ; but hurried in an instant, and utterly unprepared before that solemn tribunal, where the best-prepared will have cause to approach with trembling reverence and dread ! Happy indeed would it be, if conscious of the uncertainty of life, and the numberless accidents which in a moment may break its thin thread, we were all so wise, as to be duly prepared, and perpetually on the watch ! But as unfortunately, this work is too often neglected or deferred, we have cause to consider with much solicitude, their case, who by sudden and unforeseen accidents of any kind, are cut off in the midst of their worldly pursuits ! And therefore to recover and restore such to life, is, and will be, we may humbly hope, through God's mercy, the means to restore them, as to deep consideration and the most unfeigned gratitude ; so to a new, a better, and an eternal life !

But whatever our Charity may lead us to hope in such cases, there is a case, alas ! too frequent, and never enough to be deplored ! when the burden of life grown too heavy to be borne—the melancholy *bearer*, in fell despair, casts it from him, and plunges to evils, which he knows not of, to avoid those that are become intolerable to his soul.*

It

* It is, I believe, a vulgar error, however generally received, that *suicide* is more frequent in ours, than in other countries.

It is not many days since one of these late wretched fellow-creatures came to me: and amongst other affecting declarations, "Gratitude to God, said he, and a wish to have my sentiments made known, has brought me to you! Worldly distress, difficulties and afflictions, of various sorts, overwhelmed my mind, and sunk me in blackest despair: I determined to live no longer; and in a wild fit of frantic confusion and horror, I threw my miserable load of life into the waters!—What passed I know not; for all was darkness and oblivion, till I found myself—in what period of time I could not tell—in bed, and alive!—My wife kneeling by me, weeping in bitterest anguish; my two poor children crying beside her; some of my friends and relations standing around!—and myself—Good God—can I express my sentiments! awaking to all the horrors of my tremendous situation!—Oh, Sir, I will not attempt to express all that has pass'd in my mind through this great deliverance, this wonderful goodness of Providence in restoring me to life! Sensible, deeply sensible of the almost unpardonable sin which I attempted—

countries. I have made it my particular enquiry, wherever I have been on the Continent, and find it proportionably as common, if not more so, in all the places where I have ask'd. —Alas! there is no reason to suppose the contrary: for it is not a *Maladie du pays*, but of *poor human nature*! One reason why it is thought more common with us, is the minute information we have of all such accidents by means of our public prints. Abroad they have no such retailers of intelligence; and commonly know not in the next town—nay, in the next street, what has happened in the other.

will

I will live henceforth in the unwearied endeavour to obliterate its guilt. I will tremble at the least idea of flying into the face of my God, and daring his fearful justice ! Convinced that life is his gift and his property, that suffering and resignation to his will in every the darkest night of distress, is the Christian's duty, I will kiss his rod, and receive with humble thankfulness, every chastisement, and every evil : and think the life he has so miraculously saved, too short, too little, to attest my perfect gratitude !”

This case, my brethren, will stand in the stead of many arguments, and render them unnecessary to bespeak your attention, as *Christians*, to our Institution ! which not in the present only, but in many more examples, I have no doubt, hath been and will be the means of saving not the life only, but of saving the soul ! of saving the life for the enjoyment of immortality and glory. And that, not in the lamentable and truly distressing instances of hapless *suicides* alone ; but of those too, those parents, those husbands, those children, those worthy, useful, and industrious members of our community ; who, by luckless chance numbered with the dead, and in a state by no means prepared to meet their God—are through the present *patriotic, humane, and Christian* Institution, restored to life—restored to their families—restored to their country ! to utility, and to happiness here ; and we trust, to God eternally !

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Behold,

Behold, my beloved—and to corroborate all I have advanced, behold and rejoice with me, that this is no speculative idea—Behold before you,* some of these happy ones, thus restored by God's Providence, and present amongst us, to offer up the grateful tribute of their thanks to the sovereign preserver! Oh may he hear and receive their vows and prayers!—“ And as having saved you from the grave, and the chambers of death, may he inspire your minds with proper sentiments of gratitude and duty; enable you by his grace to walk worthy the singular mercies vouchsafed; and to sanctify to him those lives which are so peculiarly his due!—that the miraculous preservation of them may tend to his glory, and to your accumulated blessing in that realm of immortality, where alone you can be truly sensible of the greatness of this salvation!”

Nor let us, dearly beloved, behold the pathetic sight unimproved.—There is a kind of reverence which thrills through the heart, and affects the spirits on the view of fellow creatures—so lately numbered with the dead, and now, by a kind of resurrection, presenting themselves at once to our sight and our reflection! While they feelingly declare to us the uncertainty of our poor precarious existence, and the numberless

* A number of the happy objects were present at the church—amongst these a fine little boy—first fruits of the Society's labours—between three and four years old; and some of those, whose distresses had driven them to a fatal extreme, but who saved by the Charity, came to express their high sense of God's Providential Mercy.

accidents

accidents to which we are every moment exposed ; —while they instruct us in the important duty of constant preparation to meet our God in judgment ; at the same time, they plead more powerfully for the good Institution, we are met to promote, than all which the eloquence of man could invent. They speak—persuasively speak to the heart ; and they will not now speak in vain. —See in them fathers, husbands, children restored ; and oh—reflect how, as relations interested, you would feel for and bless such a restoration. And further reflect, that in this uncertain state of things, it is not impossible but you may be so interested !

Liberally then throw in your donations to the support and enlargement of the Institution—an Institution, whose sphere of good is remarkably extensive : for while other Charities, founded on the miseries and misfortunes of life strive, and humanely strive to remedy and relieve them ; this provides even for LIFE itself. And if, as all the world allows, it is commendable to alleviate those *miseries*, how much more so must it be to save that *life* ? and to become, in a degree at least, authors of an existence, which even the most wretched prize at a high rate ; and which is a possession indeed, rightly estimated, that never can be too highly prized ! You therefore, who are convinced, from your own happy existence, of its comforts and its consequence, will, in justice, in gratitude to God, and in sincere love to your fellow creatures, give yourselves the sublime, the heart-felt satisfaction of contributing as far as you are able, to the support of an Institution, calcu-

lated to save, to restore, to give that glorious, that inestimable blessing of *life*, which, as observed, may be the foundation of everlasting life!

Nor from a view of the story before you, can you doubt, that the God, who so amply increased the widow's meal and oil, will fail to crown as amply your benevolence with an abundance of internal peace and external blessings. She owed to her generous Charity—the highest distinction, the most affecting reward—a child—an only child, rescued from the grave, and restored to her affectionate embrace. The Lord, whom we serve, is not less powerful; is not less gracious than of old! Compassion and mercy are his own works; no can ever fail of his approbation and regard. Oh then, *to do good*, and *to distribute*, omit not: *for with such sacrifices your God is, and ever will be, well pleased!* Reflect how small a trifle, spared from the luxury, and waste of fashionable expences, or mere selfish gratifications—nay, how even a single saving but of one evening's passing amusement—will make no inconsiderable appearance in charitable donations! and given with a sincere eye to God and to duty, it will assuredly be remembered to your exceeding comfort. *I have been young, and now am old; yet saw I never the righteous forsaken, or his seed begging their bread*, said one, who had ample experience, on which to ground his observation. And in truth no example, I believe, can be found of any, who have ever experienced loss from liberality; want of return from Christian charity; or of due support and protection to
any

any work or office of real humanity and benevolence !

Go on then, my worthy brethren, founders, directors, and guardians of this useful plan—go on, with confidence and comfort in the support, promotion, and enlargement of it!—The hand of Providence is and will be with you : and many lives, saved through your instrumentality, will have cause to bless you, we trust, through endless ages ! Happily engaged in the pleasing consolatory office of saving life, you must look with pity and concern on those, however elevated in rank or state, who now, or at any time are, absorbed in the cruel contemplation how to destroy ! And though the misjudging many may assign triumphs and laurels to those, who have been the most successful in shedding human blood, and stand foremost of Homicides ;* in wiser and better days a civic crown would have adorned your brows ! Nay, and even in these days, the calm voice of reason and religion will applaud and honour you—And what is far preferable, the calm and quiet voice of conscience will speak peace and applause to your own hearts ; sure and blessed anticipation of that applause, which the God of Mercies, and Father of all Compassion, will bestow upon you, and upon all, who labour to save life, and to make that life blessed here, and blessed hereafter !

* *Un grand Conquerant—un scelerat heureux*, was a constant saying of my late noble friend, Lord Chesterfield. See page 222 of the Rise and Progress of the Magdalen Hospital—the 5th Edition.

any work or effort of real humanity and benevolence
Go on then, my worthy brethren, founders,
directors, and supporters of the great plan—go
on, with confidence and fervor in the support
of this great and important of it—The hands
of Providence is and will be with you; and many
lives, saved through your instrumentality, will
have cause to praise you, we trust, in the
his age! I happily engaged in the picture con-
solatory effect of the work you must have seen
put into course as a work, however it varied in
rank or kind, who is not of any thing but an ab-
solute in the end, by the plan now to be fully
And I trust the many and many who will
travels and much to do, who have seen the
small, the great in the great human heart, and
find comfort in the great, in the great and
but that a great work would have adorned
your hearts! I am in the day, the
calm work of reason and religion will appear
and I am sure, that what is far preferable, the
can be your work of confidence will speak
peace and sympathy to your own hearts; but and
blessed anticipation of that epoch, which the
God of Justice, and Father of all Creation,
will bestow upon you, and upon all who labor
to give life, and to make that life blessed, here,
and blessed hereafter!

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For many years, the American people have been
suffering from a great and terrible disease, the
disease of ignorance and superstition, which has
been the cause of much suffering and death.

